



Annual Electronic Weapons Use Analysis

A Summary of Electronic Weapons Use in Massachusetts

**Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
Office of Grants and Research
Research and Policy Analysis Division
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Introduction

Since July 2004, Massachusetts law has allowed law enforcement agencies to purchase and use electronic weapons. The law mandates that the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) approve departments' training programs for use and collect data on the use of electronic weapons.¹ At the close of Federal Fiscal Year 2010 (September 30, 2010), the training programs of 82 law enforcement agencies had been approved by EOPSS, thus permitting them to use electronic weapons (see Appendix for a list of departments) pursuant to G.L. c. 140, § 131J. Chapter 170 of the Acts of 2004 specifies that data be collected on the number of times the weapon was fired and the identifying characteristics of the individual(s) fired upon (including race and gender). This report summarizes electronic weapons data collected through quarterly reports submitted to EOPSS during the time period October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2010 (also known as Federal Fiscal Years 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010). Two law enforcement agencies were approved for electronic weapons use prior to October 1, 2005 but no use was reported. EOPSS received quarterly report data from all 82 approved law enforcement agencies during the above-mentioned time period.

Authorized Law Enforcement Agencies

The size of law enforcement agencies authorized to use electronic weapons in Massachusetts varies considerably. Authorized law enforcement agencies ranged in size over the 5-year period from an average of 8 officers to 444 officers, with a mean of 45 officers and a median of 29 officers per department. The population of the communities served by these law enforcement agencies ranged from 1,135 to 182,421.²

Every officer who possesses an electronic weapon must first attend a required training course approved by the Secretary of Public Safety and Security. With the exception of two departments, which had recently been approved for electronic weapons use, all of the law enforcement agencies indicated that at least one officer in their department had attended the approved training course, and was thus permitted to possess said weapon (the percentage of officers in each department that completed training ranged from 2%-100%). Not every officer that completed the required electronic weapons training was issued an electronic weapon. While some departments issued electronic weapons to all their officers who completed the training course, other departments train and issue electronic weapons only to a percentage of officers. It is difficult to determine the percentage of officers per department who were issued an electronic weapon, however, as some departments opt to rotate or share electronic weapons instead of assigning them to a specific officer.³

¹ H.R. 170, 180th Gen. Ct., Reg. Sess. (Ma. 2004). Massachusetts Session Laws, Chapter 170, Acts of 2004.

² Population taken from Massachusetts Census 2010 estimates from the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

³ As indicated by a number of departments on their quarterly reports.

Electronic Weapons Use

Of the 82 law enforcement agencies that were approved for electronic weapons use between FFY 2006 and FFY 2010, 52 agencies reported using electronic weapons. The remaining 30 approved agencies reported zero electronic weapons use over this four year period. Table 1 indicates with an 'X' the years in which law enforcement agencies were approved for electronic weapons.

Table 1.

Police Department	FFY 2006	FFY 2007	FFY 2008	FFY 2009	FFY 2010
Adams	X	X	X	X	X
Amesbury	X	X	X	X	X
Andover			X	X	X
Attleboro	X	X	X	X	X
Barnstable		X	X	X	X
Belchertown			X	X	X
Berkley					X
Bernardston					X
Billerica					X
Canton					X
Cape Cod RLEC			X	X	X
Chelmsford				X	X
Chelsea	X	X	X	X	X
Concord	X	X	X	X	X
Deerfield			X	X	X
East Brookfield			X	X	X
Fall River		X	X	X	X
Foxborough		X	X	X	X
Framingham	X	X	X	X	X
Franklin				X	X
Freetown	X	X	X	X	X
Gardner			X	X	X
Gill	X	X	X	X	X
Granville	X	X	X	X	X
Greenfield	X	X	X	X	X
Groton	X	X	X	X	X
Hardwick					X
Hingham				X	X
Hopedale					X
Hubbardson				X	X
Lawrence	X	X	X	X	X
Leominster				X	X
Littleton		X	X	X	X
Lynnfield					X
Mansfield				X	X
Maynard	X	X	X	X	X
Mendon					X
Methuen	X	X	X	X	X
Milford				X	X
Millville					X

Montague	X	X	X	X	X
Nantucket		X	X	X	X
Natick				X	X
New Braintree				X	X
Norfolk					X
North Adams	X	X	X	X	X
North Attleboro					X
North Brookfield			X	X	X
North Reading	X	X	X	X	X
Northborough	X	X	X	X	X
Northeast MA LEC					X
Norton	X	X	X	X	X
Peabody	X	X	X	X	X
Pembroke		X	X	X	X
Pepperell	X	X	X	X	X
Plainville					X
Plympton					X
Provincetown					X
Raynham	X	X	X	X	X
Rockland		X	X	X	X
Rowley				X	X
Salisbury		X	X	X	X
Seekonk				X	X
Somerset				X	X
Sterling				X	X
Swansea	X	X	X	X	X
Taunton					X
Templeton				X	X
Tewksbury	X	X	X	X	X
Topsfield					X
Truro					X
Tyngsborough					X
Wareham	X	X	X	X	X
Webster					X
West Boylston				X	X
West Springfield		X	X	X	X
Westfield					X
Westport				X	X
Williamstown				X	X
Winchendon		X	X	X	X
Worcester		X	X	X	X
Yarmouth			X	X	X
Total approved agencies	25	36	44	61	82

The 52 agencies that reported electronic weapon use between FFY 2006 and FFY 2010 indicated that within this time period, electronic weapons were used in a total of 856 incidents. An incident describes an individual occurrence in which law enforcement deemed it appropriate to use electronic weapons against one or more targets. In a single incident, electronic weapons may be fired one or multiple times. The incidents reported by each agency per federal fiscal year and the total number of incidents over entire time period are included below in Table 2.⁴

Table 2.
Law Enforcement Agencies that Reported Electronic Weapons Use by Number of Incidents from FFY 2006 through FFY 2010

Law Enforcement Agencies	Population	2006 Incidents	2007 Incidents	2008 Incidents	2009 Incidents	2010 Incidents	Total Incidents
Adams	8,247	0	0	0	0	2	2
Amesbury	16,708	10	11	6	4	5	36
Andover	33,700	N/A	N/A	0	1	0	1
Attleboro	43,645	4	9	28	15	10	66
Barnstable	46,297	N/A	0	24	31	37	92
Belchertown	14,141	N/A	N/A	0	0	2	2
Canton	22,382	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2
CCRLE SWAT ⁶	*	N/A	N/A	1	0	0	1
Chelmsford	34,111	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	3	6
Chelsea	37,483	0	0	5	9	14	28
Deerfield	4,692	N/A	N/A	0	1	3	4
Fall River	90,885	N/A	8	45	28	37	118
Foxborough	17,087	N/A	1	6	7	5	19
Framingham	67,185	9	7	10	8	3	37
Franklin	32,079	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	2	2
Freetown	9,076	0	7	2	3	2	14
Gardner	20,972	N/A	N/A	2	1	4	7
Gill	1,396	0	0	1	0	0	1
Greenfield	17,537	6	7	8	6	5	32
Groton	10,781	0	0	3	1	1	5
Lawrence	70,592	0	12	3	13	7	35
Leominster	42,293	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	8	8
Littleton	8,975	N/A	0	1	2	3	6
Mansfield	23,303	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	8	9
Methuen	44,371	0	3	5	3	6	17
Milford	27,616	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	1	1
Montague	8,175	3	2	4	2	2	13
Nantucket	11,322	N/A	1	1	1	3	6
Natick	32,338	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	3	3
North Adams	13,816	0	1	18	10	4	33
North Brookfield	5,057	N/A	N/A	0	0	1	1
Norton	19,315	2	2	5	3	8	20
Peabody	51,726	0	0	1	0	0	1
Pembroke	18,848	N/A	0	3	2	2	7
Pepperell	11,508	0	1	1	5	4	11

⁴ Not all departments were approved for electronic weapons use for all three years. The term “N/A” refers to cities/towns that were not approved for electronic weapons use within that federal fiscal year.

Plympton	2,800	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2
Raynham	13,648	3	1	2	0	1	7
Rockland	18,086	N/A	0	1	4	5	10
Salisbury	8,608	N/A	5	7	4	1	17
Seekonk	13,869	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	2	2
Somerset	18,556	N/A	N/A	N/A	4	4	8
Sterling	7,786	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	2	2
Swansea	16,175	0	2	3	3	3	11
Taunton	55,815	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6	6
Tewksbury	30,597	0	4	3	2	6	15
Wareham	21,349	3	20	16	15	18	72
Webster	16,877	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	1
West Boylston	8,109	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	2	3
Westfield	42,133	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6	6
Westport	15,504	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	1	2
Worcester	182,421	N/A	4	9	6	8	27
Yarmouth	23,848	N/A	N/A	3	6	10	19
Total	1,413,840	40	108	227	206	275	856

Table 3 shows the 52 agencies that reported electronic weapons use and the number of times the electronic weapons were fired by each agency.⁵ The 30 approved agencies that reported zero electronic weapons use over this four year period are once again omitted. During the 856 incidents between FFY 2006 and FFY 2010, electronic weapons were fired a total of 1,457 times.

Table 3.

Law Enforcement Agencies that Reported Electronic Weapons Use by Number of Times Fired from FFY 2006 through FFY 2010

Law Enforcement Agencies	Population⁵	2006 Times Fired	2007 Times Fired	2008 Times Fired	2009 Times Fired	2010 Times Fired	Total Times Fired
Adams	8,247	0	0	0	0	2	2
Amesbury	16,708	16	17	11	10	6	60
Andover	33,700	N/A	N/A	0	1	0	1
Attleboro	43,645	4	12	46	26	16	104
Barnstable	46,297	N/A	0	31	47	52	130
Belchertown	14,141	N/A	N/A	0	0	3	3
Canton	22,382	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2
CCRLE SWAT ⁶	*	N/A	N/A	2	0	0	2
Chelmsford	34,111	N/A	N/A	N/A	8	5	13
Chelsea	37,483	0	0	6	18	17	41
Deerfield	4,692	N/A	N/A	0	1	3	4
Fall River	90,885	N/A	15	114	73	70	272
Foxborough	17,087	N/A	1	10	8	5	24
Framingham	67,185	16	11	17	10	16	70
Franklin	32,079	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	7	7
Freetown	9,076	0	15	2	4	12	33
Gardner	20,972	N/A	N/A	3	1	5	9
Gill	1,396	0	0	1	0	0	1

⁵ Not all departments were approved for electronic weapons use for all three years. The term “N/A” refers to cities/towns that were not approved for electronic weapons use within that federal fiscal year.

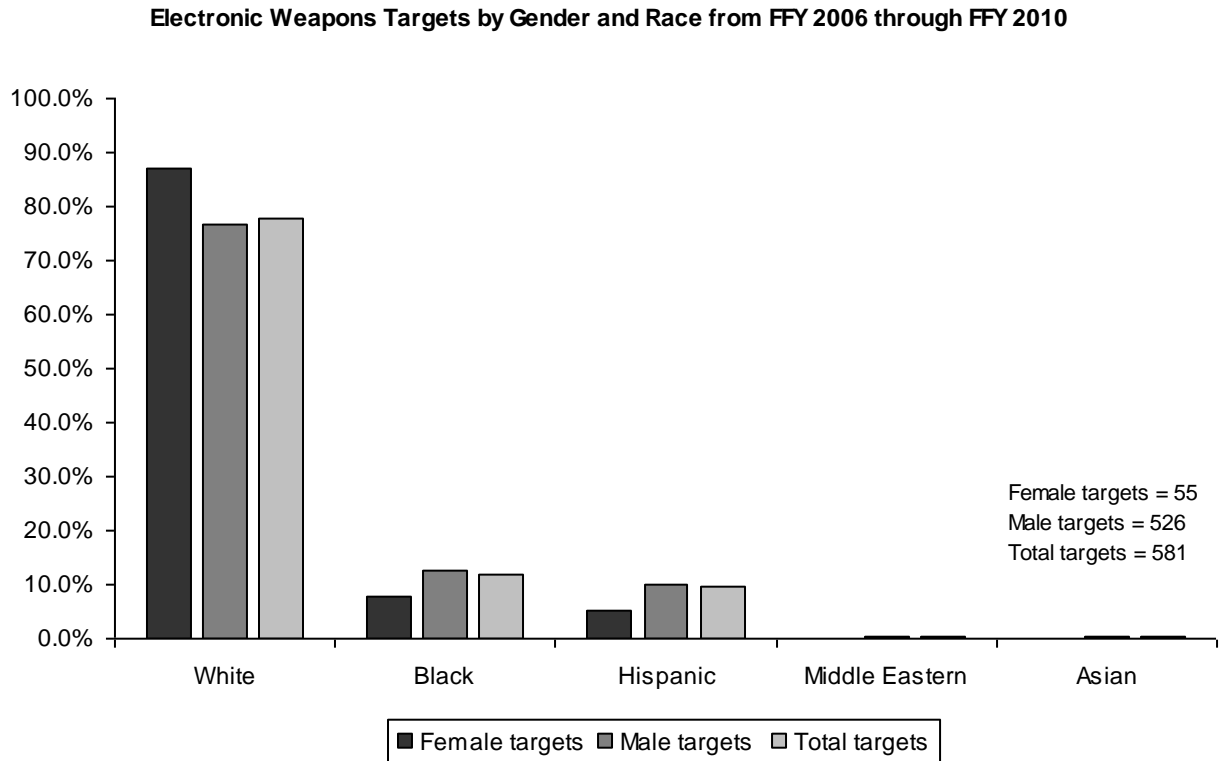
Greenfield	17,537	10	14	11	12	9	56
Groton	10,781	0	0	5	1	1	7
Lawrence	70,592	0	12	4	16	9	41
Leominster	42,293	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	10	10
Littleton	8,975	N/A	0	1	2	4	7
Mansfield	23,303	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	13	14
Methuen	44,371	0	19	6	9	11	45
Milford	27,616	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	2	2
Montague	8,175	4	2	4	2	2	14
Nantucket	11,322	N/A	13	1	1	5	20
Natick	32,338	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	6	6
North Adams	13,816	0	1	24	10	4	39
North Brookfield	5,057	N/A	N/A	0	0	1	1
Norton	19,315	4	2	9	3	24	42
Peabody	51,726	0	0	1	0	0	1
Pembroke	18,848	N/A	0	7	2	2	11
Pepperell	11,508	0	2	1	9	5	17
Plympton	2,800	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2
Raynham	13,648	3	1	5	0	1	10
Rockland	18,086	N/A	0	1	6	5	12
Salisbury	8,608	N/A	6	7	7	1	21
Seekonk	13,869	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	3	3
Somerset	18,556	N/A	N/A	N/A	11	7	18
Sterling	7,786	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	2	2
Swansea	16,175	0	2	4	5	3	14
Taunton	55,815	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	16	16
Tewksbury	30,597	0	8	27	2	10	47
Wareham	21,349	6	31	25	21	29	112
Webster	16,877	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2
West Boylston	8,109	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	3	6
Westfield	42,133	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	13	13
Westport	15,504	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	1	2
Worcester	182,421	N/A	7	10	7	10	34
Yarmouth	23,848	N/A	N/A	8	10	14	32
Total	1,413,840	63	191	404	348	451	1,457

Electronic Weapon Targets

Law enforcement agencies reported using electronic weapons on 858 targets between FFY 2006 and FFY 2010. The majority of the targets were male (91%).

Figure 1 illustrates the racial/ethnic breakdown of the targets by gender. Both male and female targets were predominately White (76.7% and 87.0%, respectively). The racial breakdown for the total population of targets is as follows: 77.6% White (666), 12.0% Black (103), 9.6% Hispanic (82), 0.3% Middle Eastern (3), and 0.5% Asian (4).

Figure 1.



Appendix A

Law enforcement agencies approved for electronic weapons use as of September 30, 2010:

Adams Police Department	Nantucket Police Department
Amesbury Police Department	Natick Police Department
Andover Police Department	New Braintree Police Department
Attleboro Police Department	Norfolk Police Department
Barnstable Police Department	North Adams Police Department
Belchertown Police Department	North Attleboro Police Department
Berkley Police Department	North Brookfield Police Department
Bernardston Police Department	North Reading Police Department
Billerica Police Department	Northborough Police Department
Canton Police Department	North Eastern Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council
Cape Cod Regional Law Enforcement SWAT	Norton Police Department
Chelmsford Police Department	Peabody Police Department
Chelsea Police Department	Pembroke Police Department
Concord Police Department	Pepperell Police Department
Deerfield Police Department	Plainville Police Department
East Brookfield Police Department	Plympton Police Department
Fall River Police Department	Provincetown Police Department
Foxborough Police Department	Raynham Police Department
Framingham Police Department	Rockland Police Department
Franklin Police Department	Rowley Police Department
Freetown Police Department	Salisbury Police Department
Gardner Police Department	Seekonk Police Department
Gill Police Department	Somerset Police Department
Granville Police Department	Sterling Police Department
Greenfield Police Department	Swansea Police Department
Groton Police Department	Taunton Police Department
Hardwick Police Department	Templeton Police Department
Hingham Police Department	Tewksbury Police Department
Hopedale Police Department	Topsfield Police Department
Hubbardson Police Department	Truro Police Department
Lawrence Police Department	Tyngsborough Police Department
Leominster Police Department	Wareham Police Department
Littleton Police Department	Webster Police Department
Lynnfield Police Department	West Boylston Police Department
Mansfield Police Department	West Springfield Police Department
Maynard Police Department	Westfield Police Department
Mendon Police Department	Westport Police Department
Methuen Police Department	Williamstown Police Department
Milford Police Department	Winchendon Police Department
Millville Police Department	Worcester Police Department
Montague Police Department	Yarmouth Police Department